

# Bubbles & Eggs

HARINDRANATH CHATOPADHYAYA

drawings by J. Fowler.



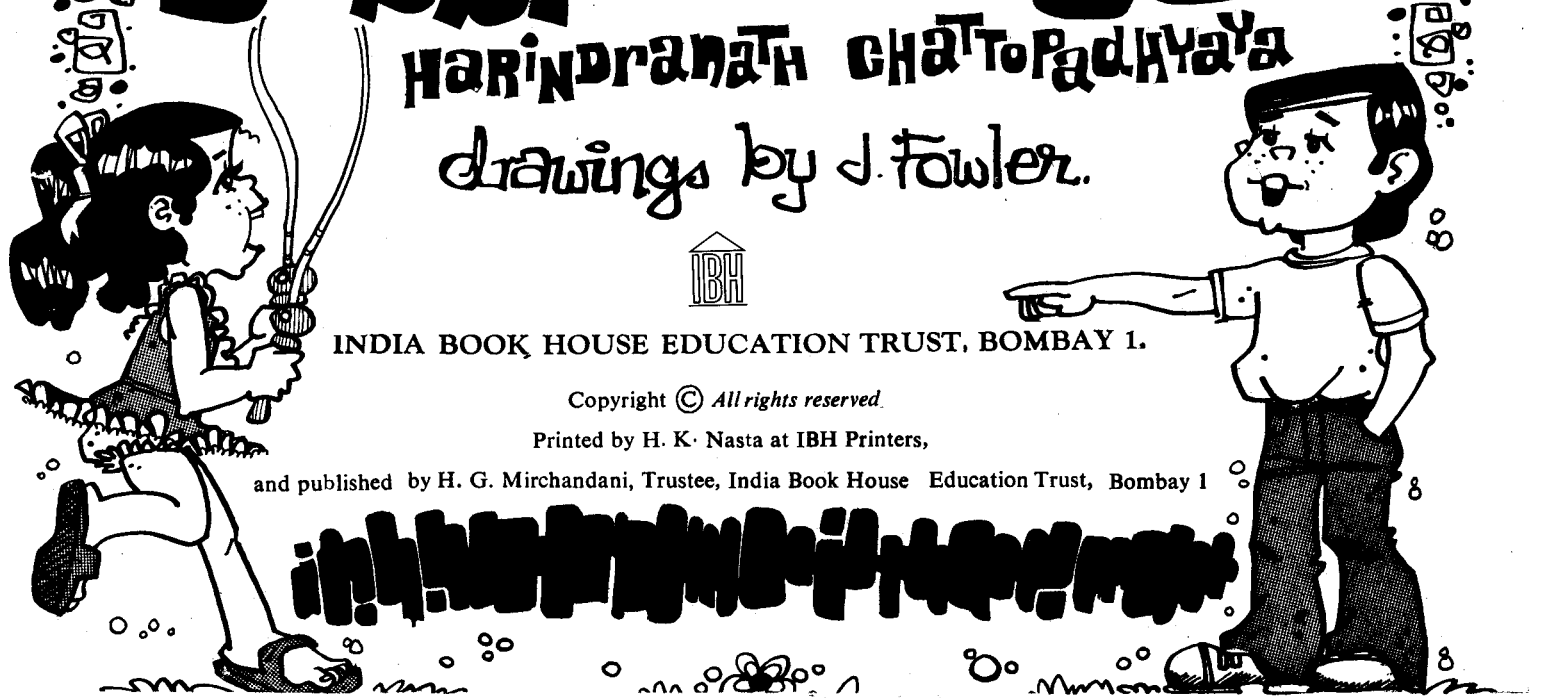
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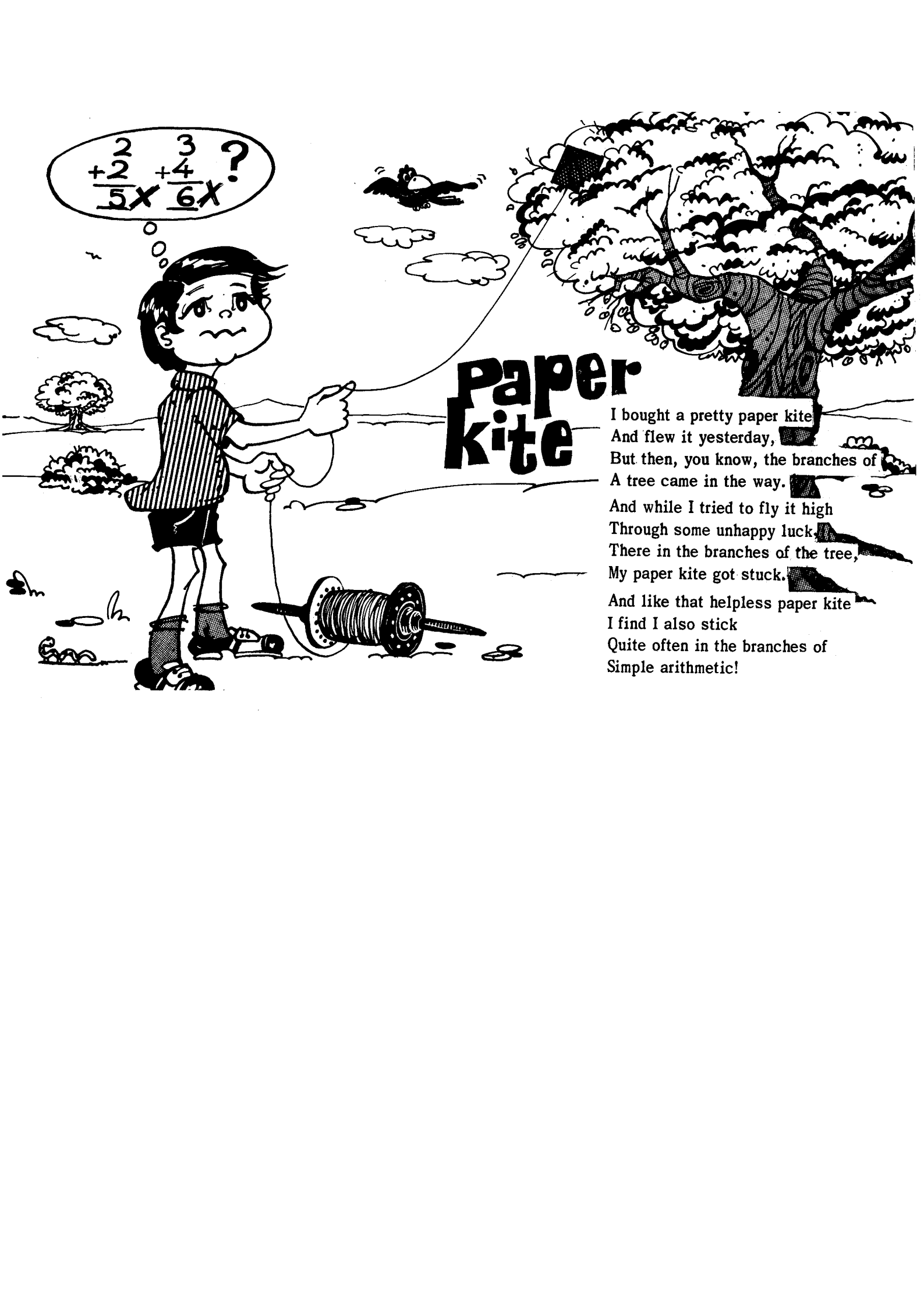
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India Book House Education Trust, Bombay 1




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# Paper kite

I bought a pretty paper kite  
And flew it yesterday,  
But then, you know, the branches of  
A tree came in the way.

And while I tried to fly it high  
Through some unhappy luck,  
There in the branches of the tree,  
My paper kite got stuck.

And like that helpless paper kite  
I find I also stick  
Quite often in the branches of  
Simple arithmetic!

# NATURE

There is magic everywhere,  
On the earth and in the air,  
In the water, in the sky,  
There and here and here and there:  
There is magic everywhere  
Waiting to enchant the eye!

Nature toils for hours on hours,  
You have only got to see  
How the busy purple bee  
Buzzing wild in scented bowers  
Gathers honey from sweet flowers.

Nature draws us, one and all,  
To her Entertainment Hall,  
Where a thousand shapes perform  
Time's delightful pantomime,  
Clad in colours cool or warm.  
Taking all of us by storm,  
Every moment, every time!

Watch with wonder in your eyes  
The performance going on  
Noon and dusk and night and dawn:  
Slowly we will realise  
Beauty with her magic pull  
Draws us to herself and starts  
Exquisitely beautiful  
Love of Nature in our hearts.





# the Wind.

The wind, he is a naughty chap,  
Who whistles far and loud:  
Today he wears a patchwork cap  
Of ragged rainy cloud.

He wanders here, he wanders there,  
With mischief in his mirth,  
He does not care, he does not care  
For anyone on earth!

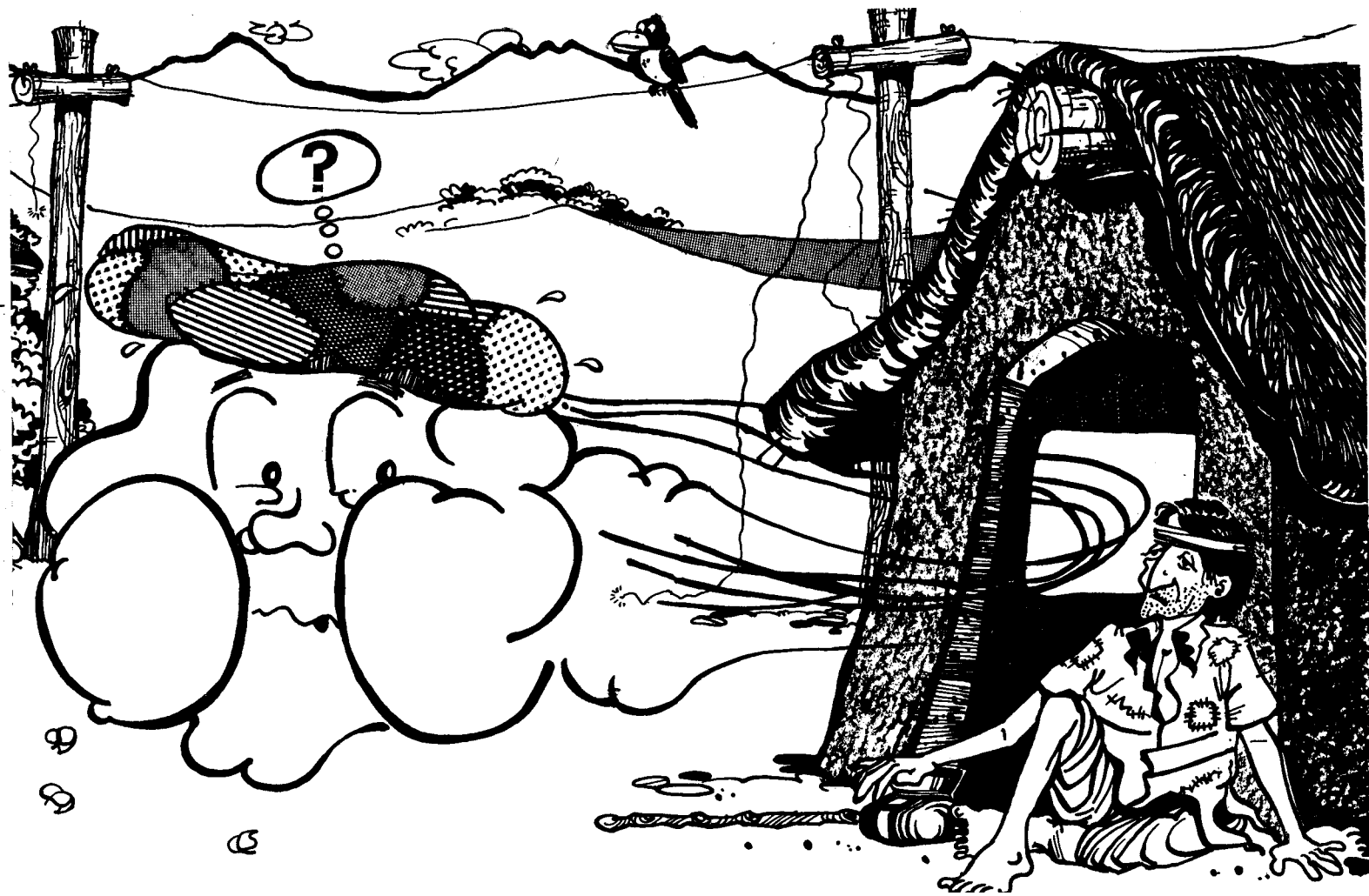
He tries to blow out kitchen fires,  
He leads the sands a-stray,  
He tampers with electric wires  
And, sometimes, has his way.

The wind who roves from place to place,  
Undisciplined, unschooled,  
Tonight, at least, shall hide his face:  
I saw him being fooled.

He rushed into a beggar's hut,  
The vagabonding scamp,  
To tamper with his clay-lamp, but  
The beggar had no lamp!

Ah fool! You might extinguish then  
The very moon and sun,  
But not the lamps of beggar-men  
Since, most of them have none!





# My puppy dog

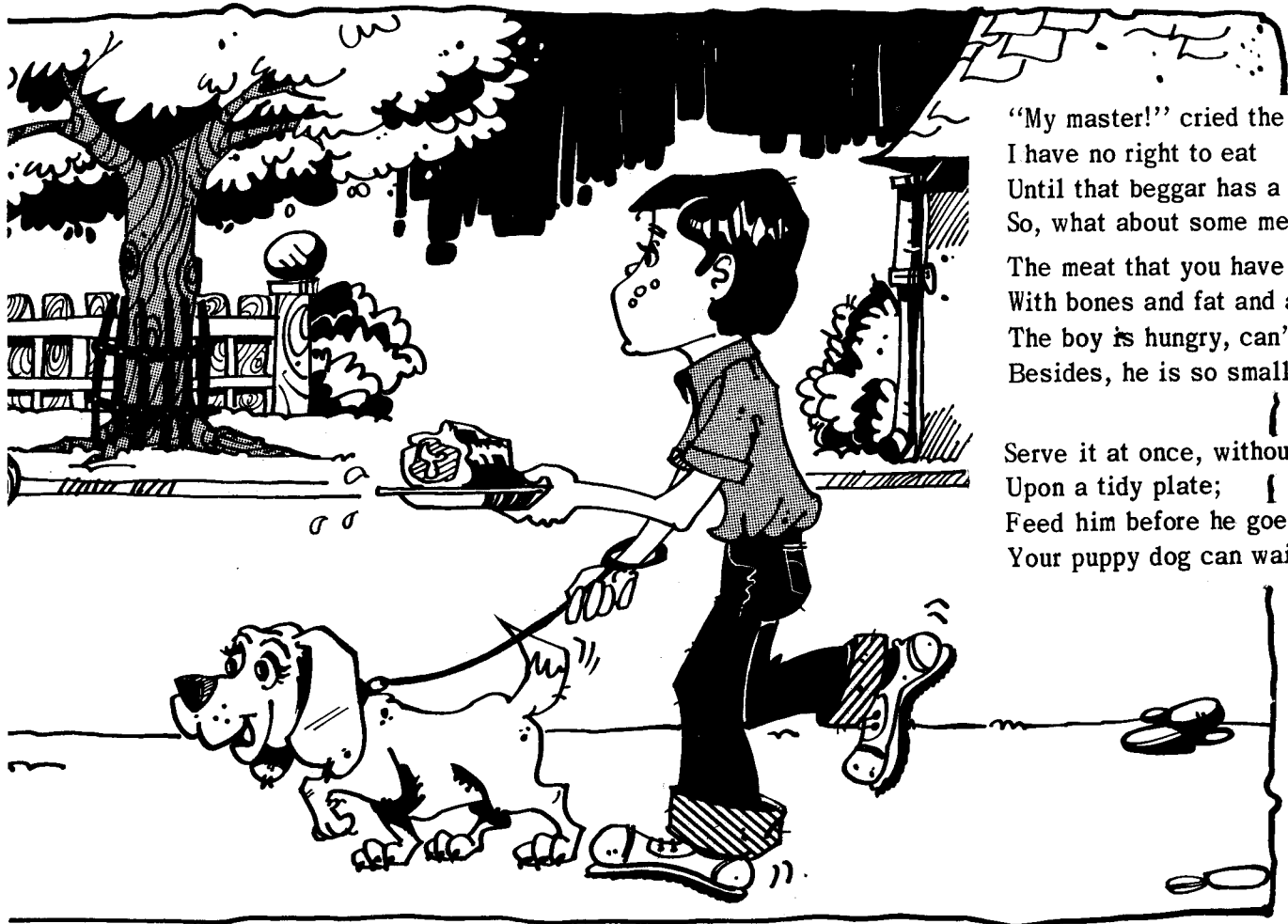
I have a little puppy dog  
Who loves his morning walk;  
He starts off on a dialogue  
Once he begins to talk.

It does not take you very long  
To guess that he is wise;  
He is unusually strong  
For such a pigmy size!

One day a little beggar came  
Hobbling upon one leg.

"O!" said the pup, "it is a shame  
That people have to beg!"



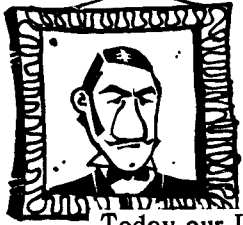


"My master!" cried the dog, "I feel  
I have no right to eat  
Until that beggar has a meal,  
So, what about some meat?"

The meat that you have cooked for me,  
With bones and fat and all...  
The boy is hungry, can't you see,  
Besides, he is so small!

Serve it at once, without delay,  
Upon a tidy plate; {  
Feed him before he goes away,  
Your puppy dog can wait!"

# Daddy Spectacles.



Today our Daddy Spectacles  
Is very very sad  
Since he has lost his spectacles,  
The only pair he had!

Without that pair of spectacles  
He can't tell A from Z,  
So the only thing for him to do  
Is to go back to bed!

But that he will not do unless  
He finds the precious pair:  
Pray! who can tell him where it is,  
Say! who can tell him where?

A-hunting for those spectacles  
From room to room he goes:  
Daddy your pair of spectacles  
Is on your very nose!

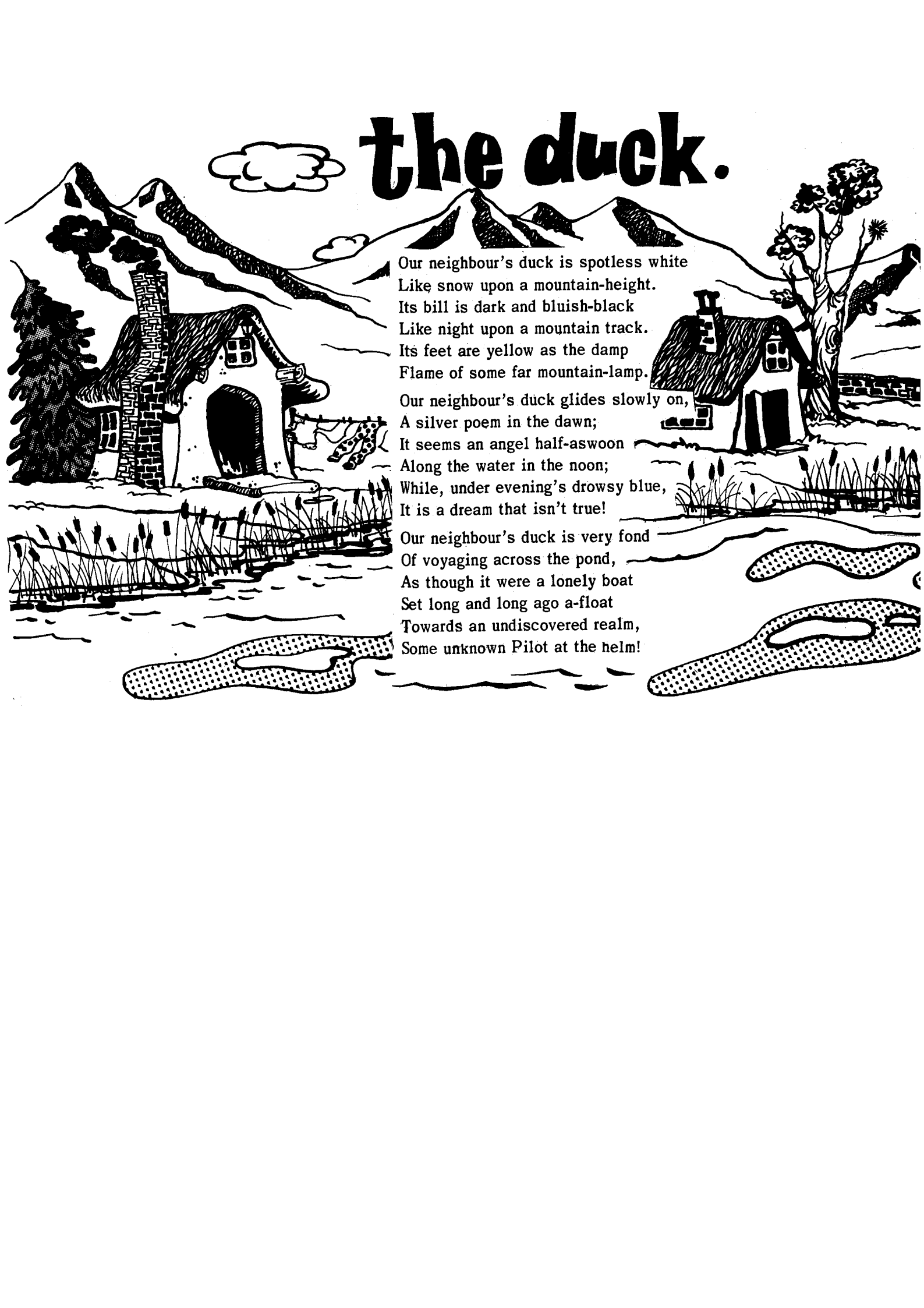




# SONG OF THE WIND

The parrot sang:  
"I am held in a cage."  
The poem sang:  
"I am held on a page."  
The tear-drop sang:  
"I am held in an eye."  
The small star sang:  
"I am held in the sky."  
But the wild wind whistled  
From tree to tree:  
"Whooo! Little schoolboy!  
I am free!"

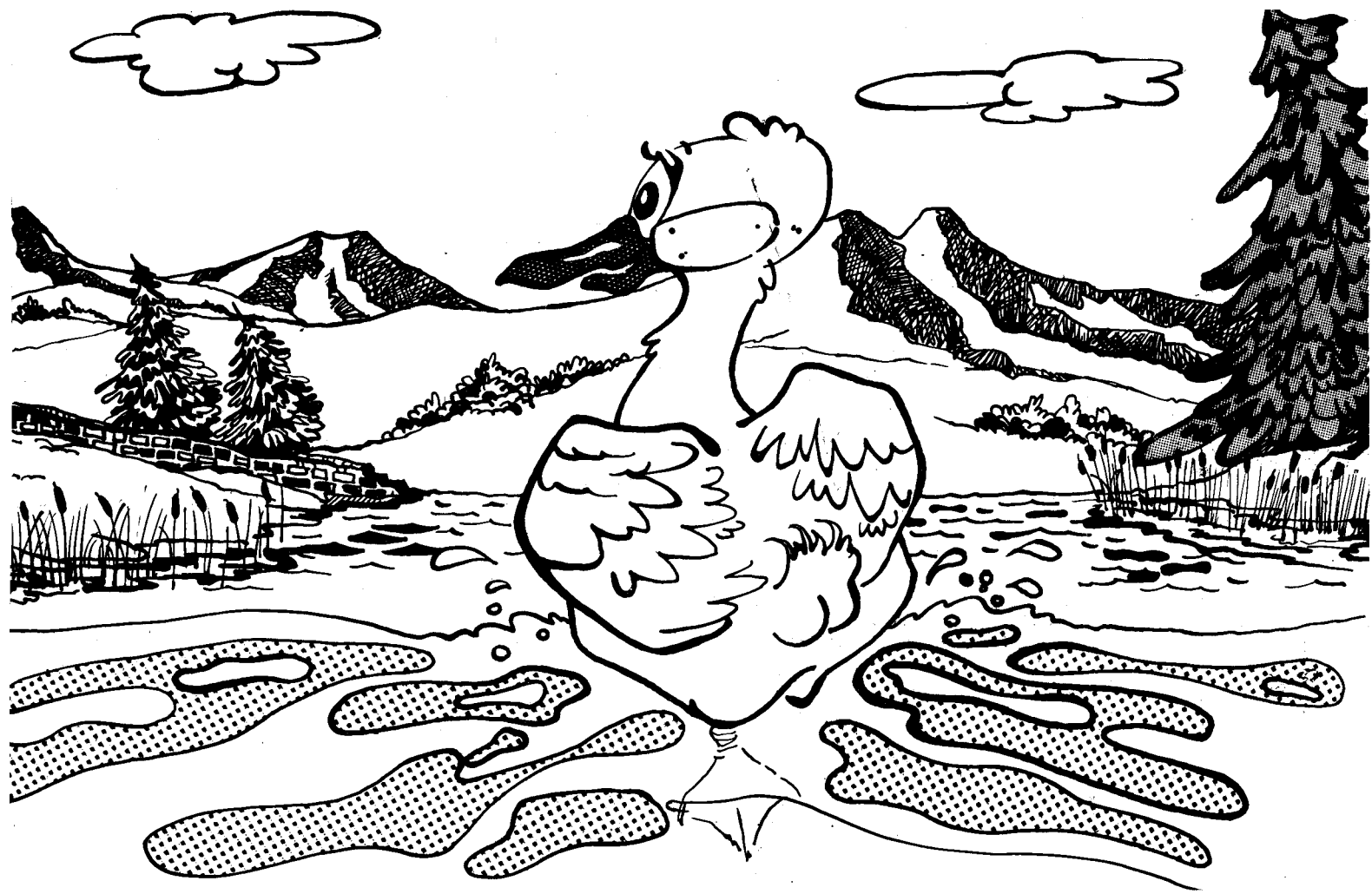
# the duck.



Our neighbour's duck is spotless white  
Like snow upon a mountain-height.  
Its bill is dark and bluish-black  
Like night upon a mountain track.  
Its feet are yellow as the damp  
Flame of some far mountain-lamp.

Our neighbour's duck glides slowly on,  
A silver poem in the dawn;  
It seems an angel half-aswoon  
Along the water in the noon;  
While, under evening's drowsy blue,  
It is a dream that isn't true!

Our neighbour's duck is very fond  
Of voyaging across the pond,  
As though it were a lonely boat  
Set long and long ago a-float  
Towards an undiscovered realm,  
Some unknown Pilot at the helm!

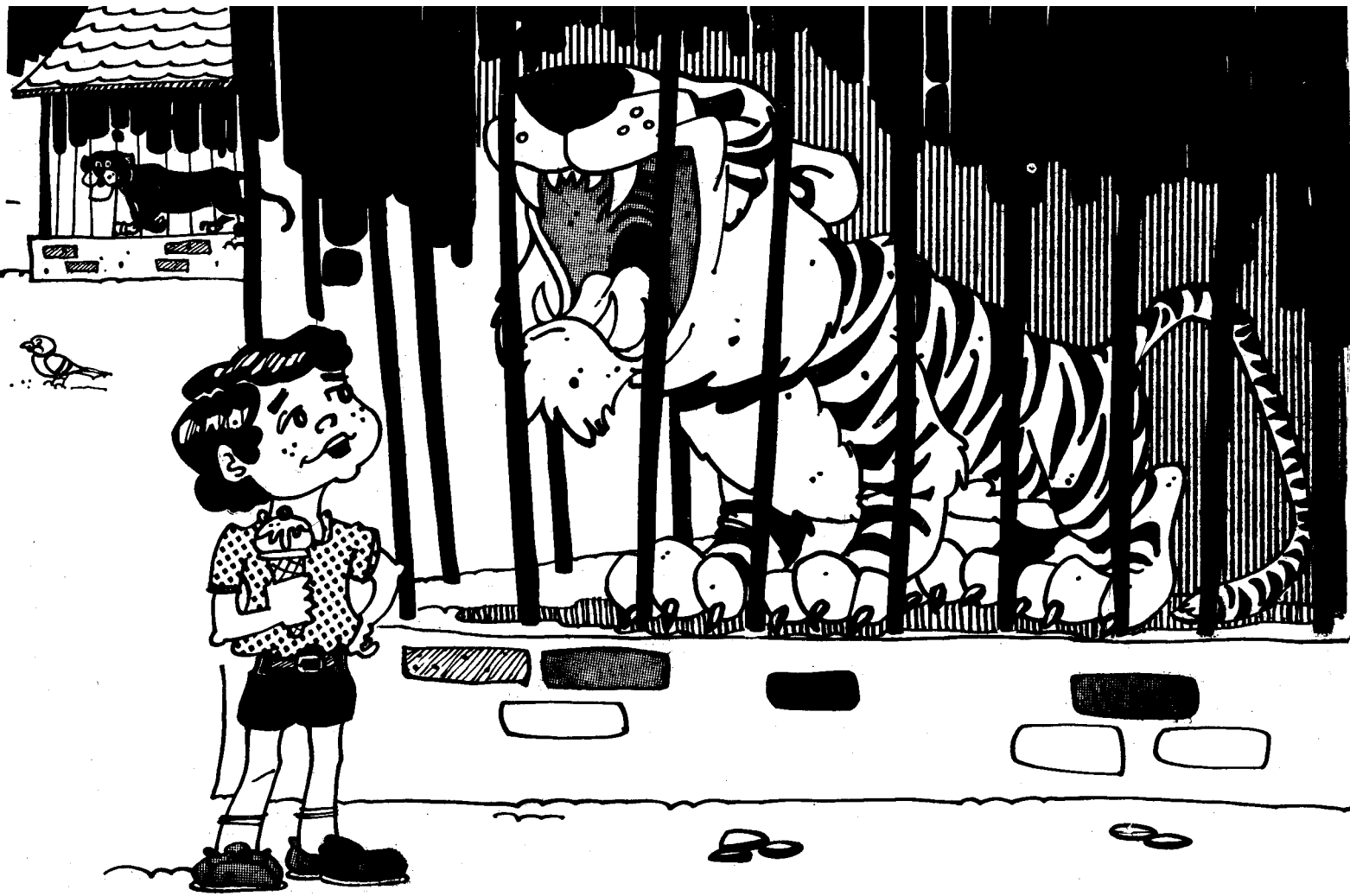




# The Hero

I am not afraid of the tiger,  
I am seven years of age.  
I am not afraid of the tiger,  
When it rumbles and roars in a rage.  
I am not afraid of the tiger  
Provided it is in a CAGE!!!





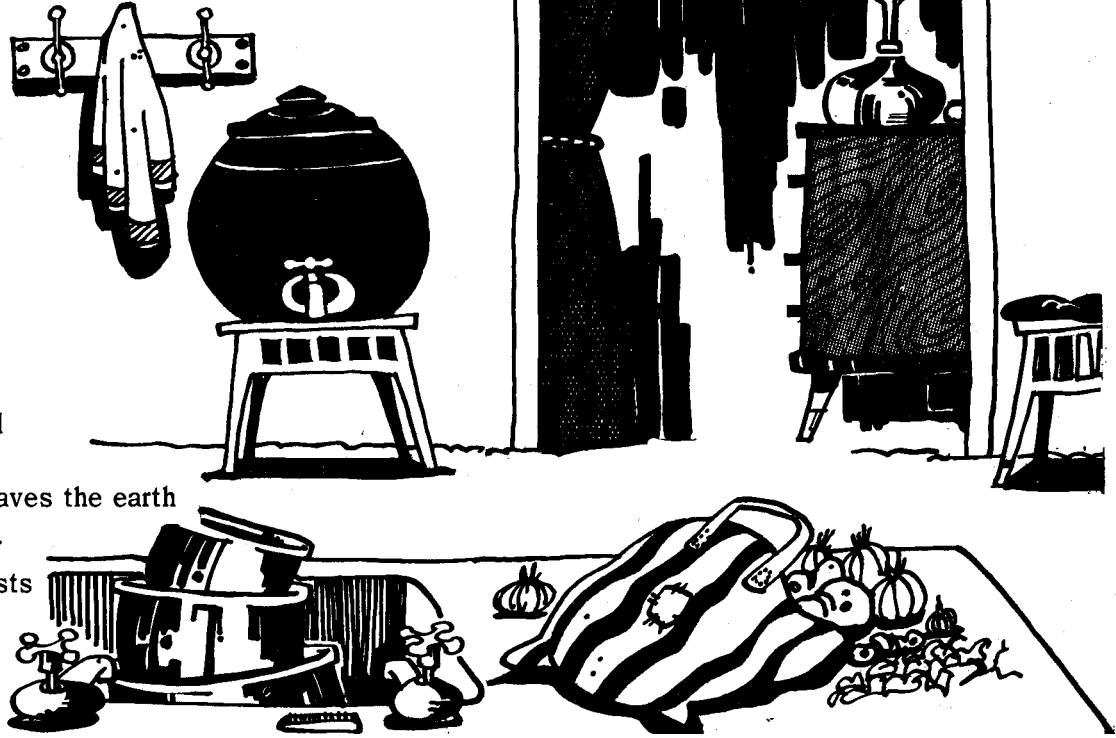
# Old Cook Subamma

Our Subamma is very old  
And has a curious stoop.  
She often overboils the rice  
And underboils the soup.

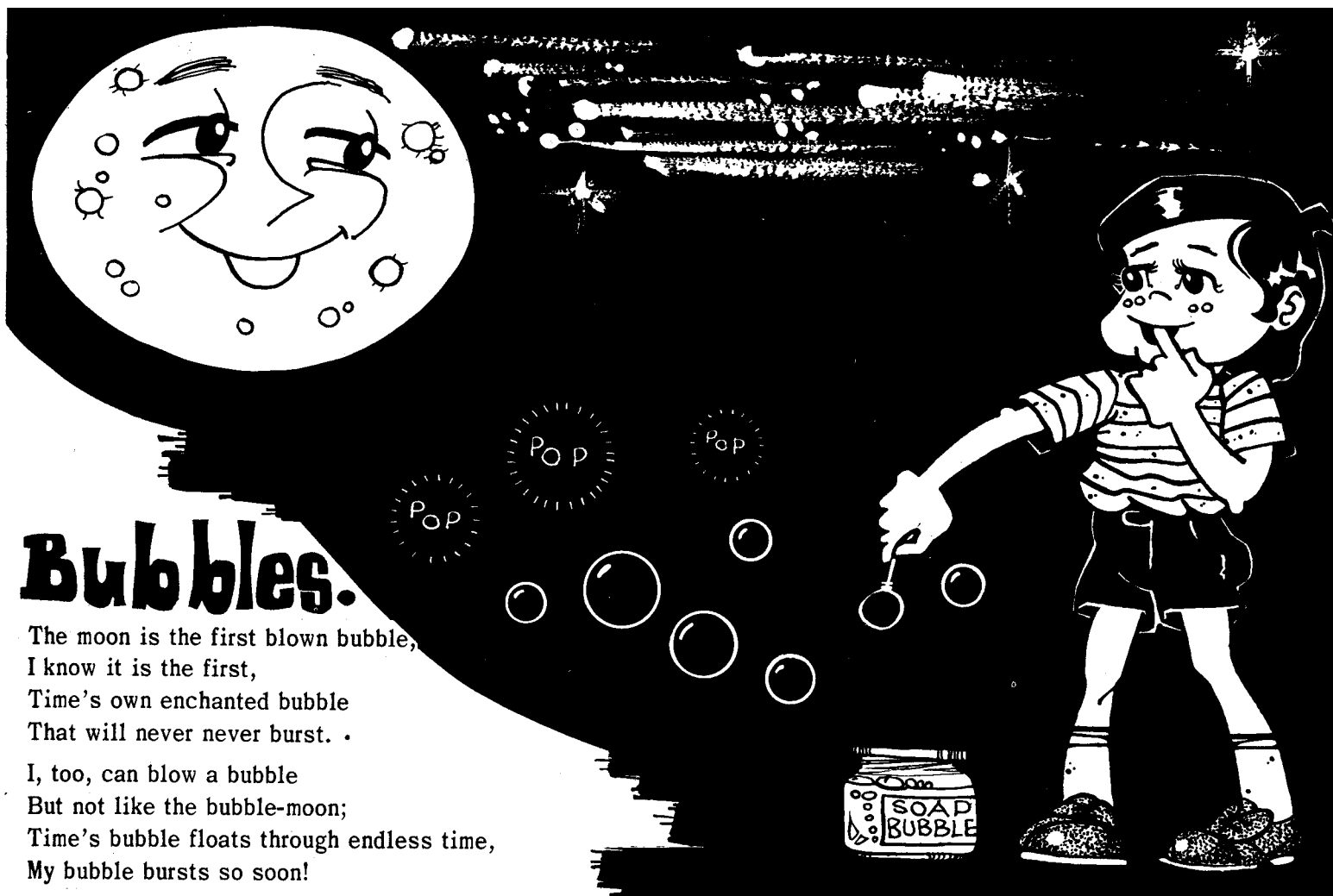
Old Subamma is getting blind,  
So, it is not her fault,  
If to the cooking pot she adds  
A little too much salt!

Poor Subamma works very hard  
Though she is seventy-seven,  
Which means that when she leaves the earth  
She will go straight to heaven.

And there amidst her angel hosts  
She will no longer stoop,  
No longer overboil the rice  
Or underboil the soup!







# Bubbles.

The moon is the first blown bubble,  
I know it is the first,  
Time's own enchanted bubble  
That will never never burst. .

I, too, can blow a bubble  
But not like the bubble-moon;  
Time's bubble floats through endless time,  
My bubble bursts so soon!



# EGGS

We have a hen, a glossy hen  
And she is black as night:  
But then, it makes me wonder why  
The eggs she lays are white.

Our neighbour has a hen as well  
And she is white as snow:  
Now if the black hen's eggs be white,  
I would so like to know

Why does our neighbour's mother-hen  
That is so glossy-white,  
Not think at all of laying eggs  
Which are as black as night?



# Grannie

O dear! O dear! O dear!  
Old Grannie cannot hear.  
Of late her ears have grown  
As deaf as any stone.  
She cannot hear the loud  
Thunder-burst of cloud.  
She only sees the lightning  
Over the tree-tops brightening,  
And says: O dear! I wonder!  
Has lightning lost its thunder?  
O dear! O dear! O dear!  
All because she cannot hear.



# The Train

In the sunshine, through the rain,  
With a bossing giant's style,  
Crossing mile on mile on mile  
Over hill and over plain,  
Over and over,  
Over and over,  
Over and over and over again!  
Steaming, screaming,  
Screaming, steaming,  
Fretting, fuming,  
Fire-consuming,  
Rattling goes the Railway Train!

Jook, jook, jook, jook!...

Jook, jook, jook, jook!...

Little wayside stations cry:  
Look! The train is passing by!

Look, look, look, look,

Look, look, look, look!...

Wheel upon wheel!  
Rattle and reel!  
Rattle and reel!  
Rattle and reel!

Giant of smoke and stubborn steel!

Reel and rattle!  
Reel and rattle!  
Tell us, is it  
Off to a battle?  
Reel and rattle,  
Reel and rattle!

Tearing the air and frightening cattle!

How does it feel  
To rattle and reel?

From there to here

From here to there

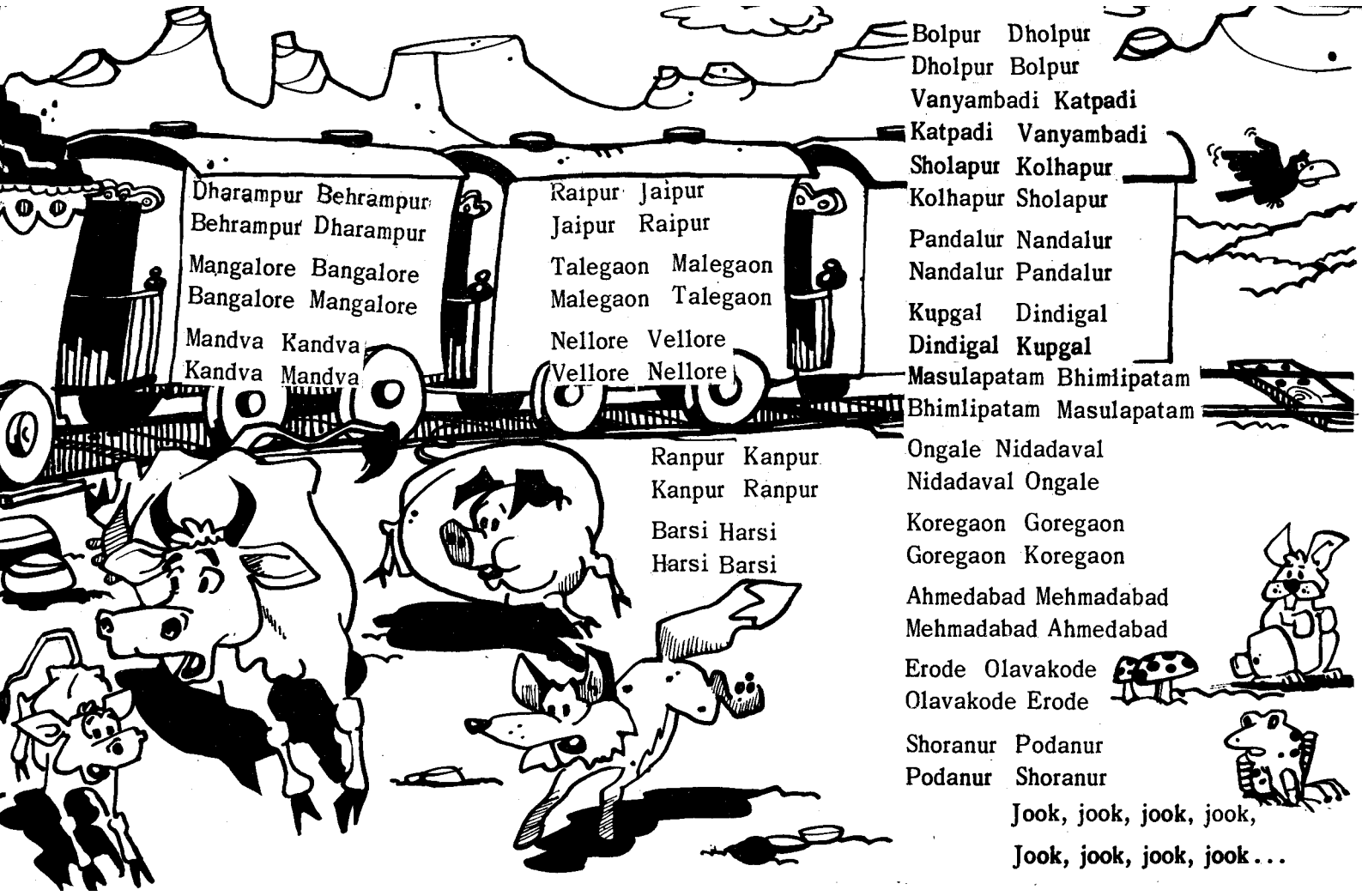
Frightening cattle and tearing the air.

From there to here

From here to there

To everywhere! To everywhere!





Bolpur Dholpur

Dholpur Bolpur

Vanyambadi Katpadi

Katpadi Vanyambadi

Sholapur Kolhapur

Kolhapur Sholapur

Pandalur Nandalur

Nandalur Pandalur

Kuppal Dindigal

Dindigal Kuppal

Masulapatam Bhimlipatam

Bhimlipatam Masulapatam

Ongale Nidadaval

Nidadaval Ongale

Koregaon Goregaon

Goregaon Koregaon

Ahmedabad Mehmabad

Mehmabad Ahmedabad

Erode Olavakode

Olavakode Erode

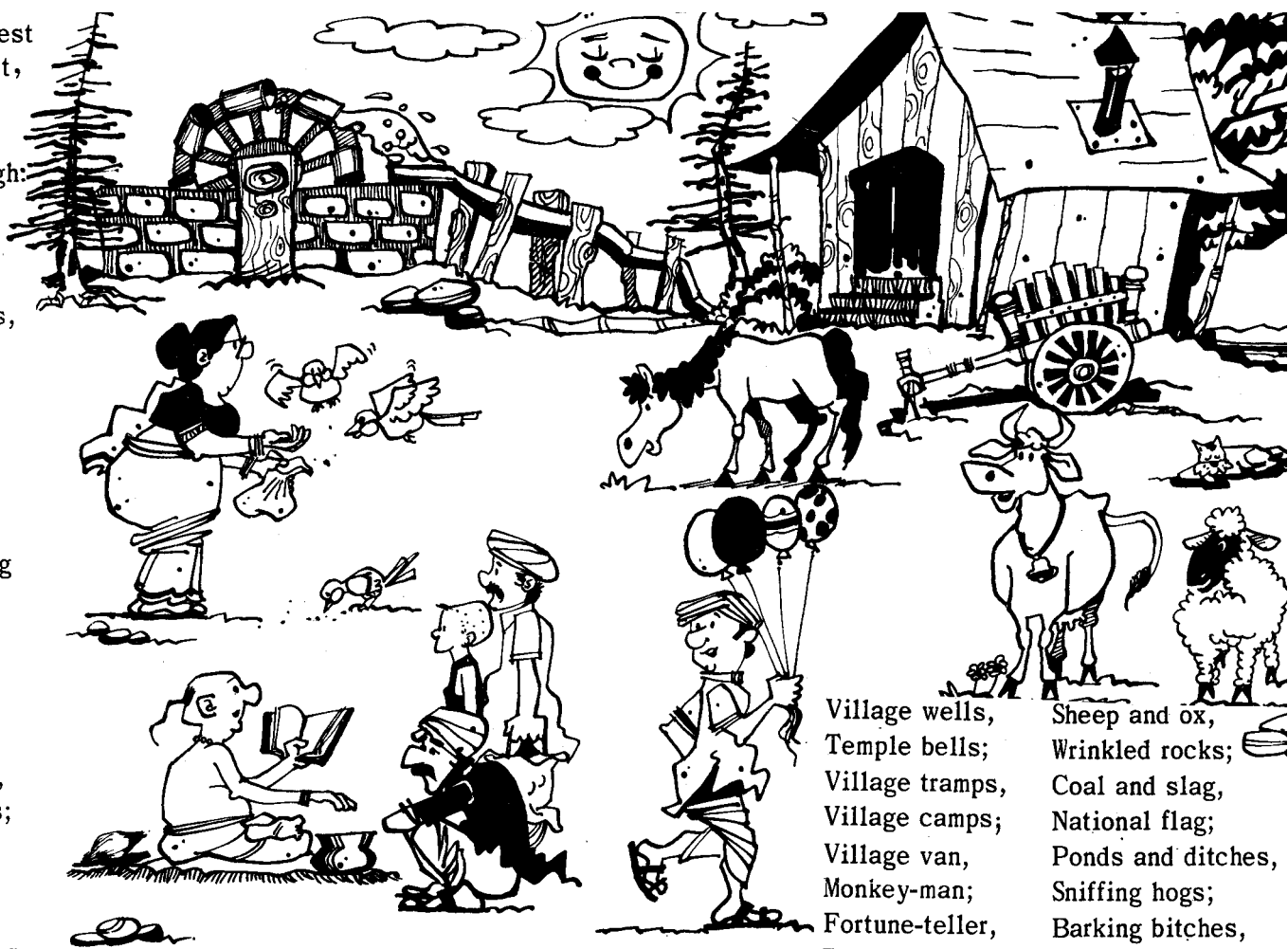
Shoranur Podanur

Podanur Shoranur

Jook, jook, jook, jook,

Jook, jook, jook, jook...

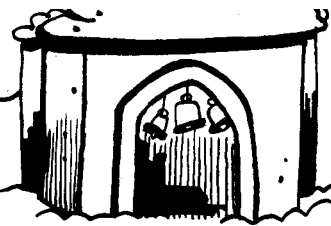
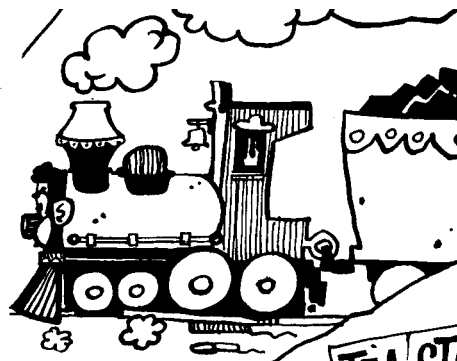
Swelling its chest  
Without any rest,  
Under the sky  
It rattles by  
It rushes through:  
Koo-oo-ooo!  
Ants and hills,  
Water-mills;  
Village schools,  
Village pools;  
Village yards,  
Village bards.  
Woman feeding  
Little birds  
Chirping loud.  
Old man reading  
Holy words  
To a halting  
Village-crowd.  
Village marts,  
Village carts;  
Village ponies,  
Village cronies;  
Village stalls,  
Broken walls;  
Village fairs,  
Mules and mares;



Village wells,  
Temple bells;  
Village tramps,  
Village camps;  
Village van,  
Monkey-man;  
Fortune-teller,  
Balloon-seller;  
Sheep and ox,  
Wrinkled rocks;  
Coal and slag,  
National flag;  
Ponds and ditches,  
Sniffing hogs;  
Barking bitches,  
Sleeping dogs;

village burroon,  
White-robed nun;  
Rising moon,  
Setting sun;  
Toil and tillage,  
Busy village;

Cauldrons boiling,  
Asses braying,  
Children playing;  
People praying;  
Idols of clay  
Along the way;  
Lotus-tanks,  
River-banks;  
Drunkards, knaves,  
Village graves,  
And the train goes on and on,  
On and on and on and on,



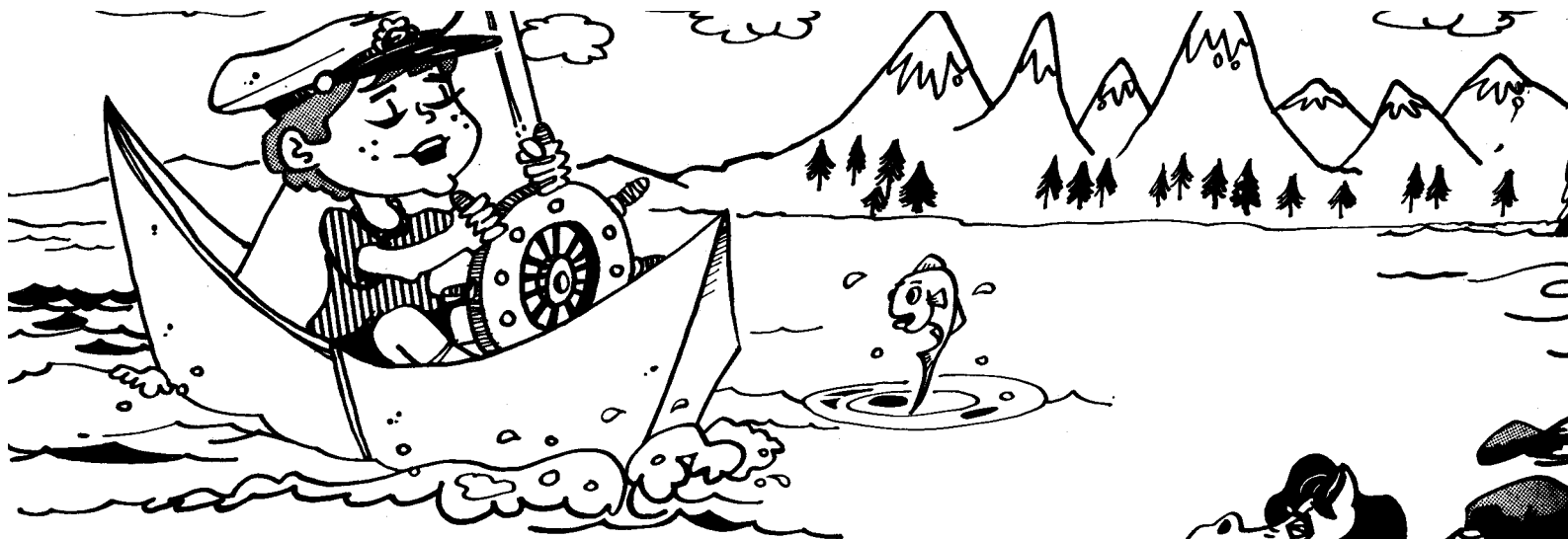
Without repose,  
Swelling its chest  
Without any rest,  
Under the sky  
It rushes by,  
From there to here  
From here to there,  
To everywhere  
To everywhere:  
Koo-oo-oooooooooooo!!!

Field on field,  
Harvest yield;  
Harvest crops,  
Small tea-shops;  
Pots and pans,  
Winnowing fans;  
Money-lenders  
Lending loans;  
Vessel-vendors,  
Grinding stones;  
Hoops of steel,  
Spinning wheel;  
Sunlit plains,  
Flocks of cranes;  
Women toiling,



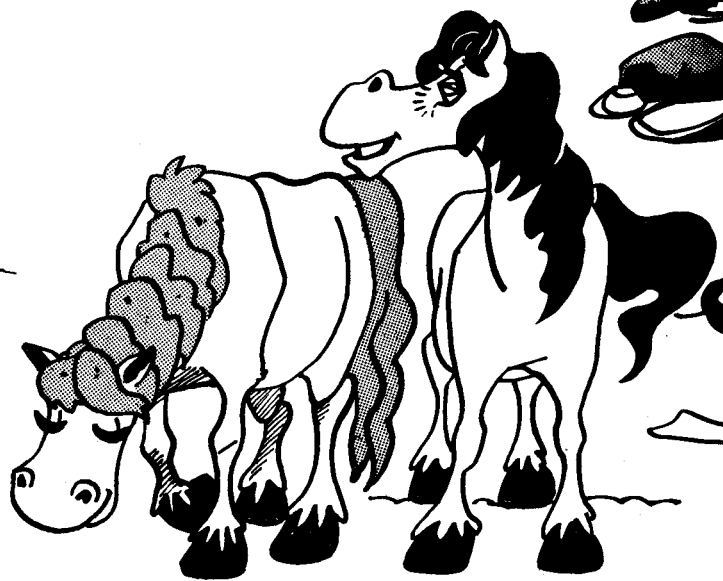
From dawn till dusk  
From dusk till dawn...  
On and on and on and on,  
Rattles and goes





# VOYAGE

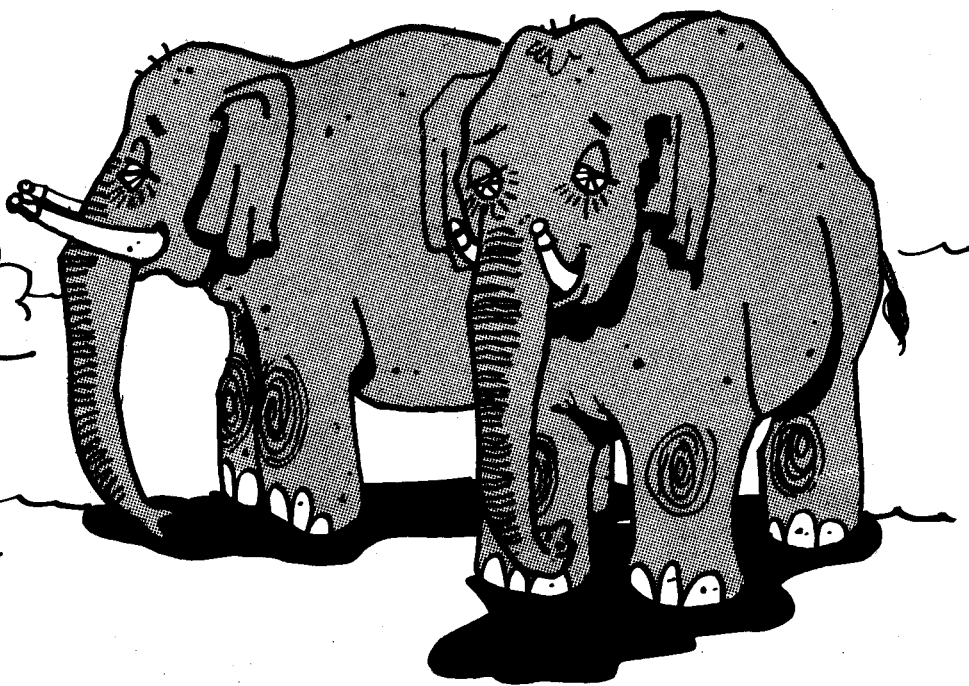
I'll make a pretty paper-boat  
And float it on the pond,  
I'll steer it all alone, alone,  
And sail away beyond  
The seven mountains, seven seas  
Beyond the seven skies,  
Until I reach the kingdom where  
The mares have ruby eyes.





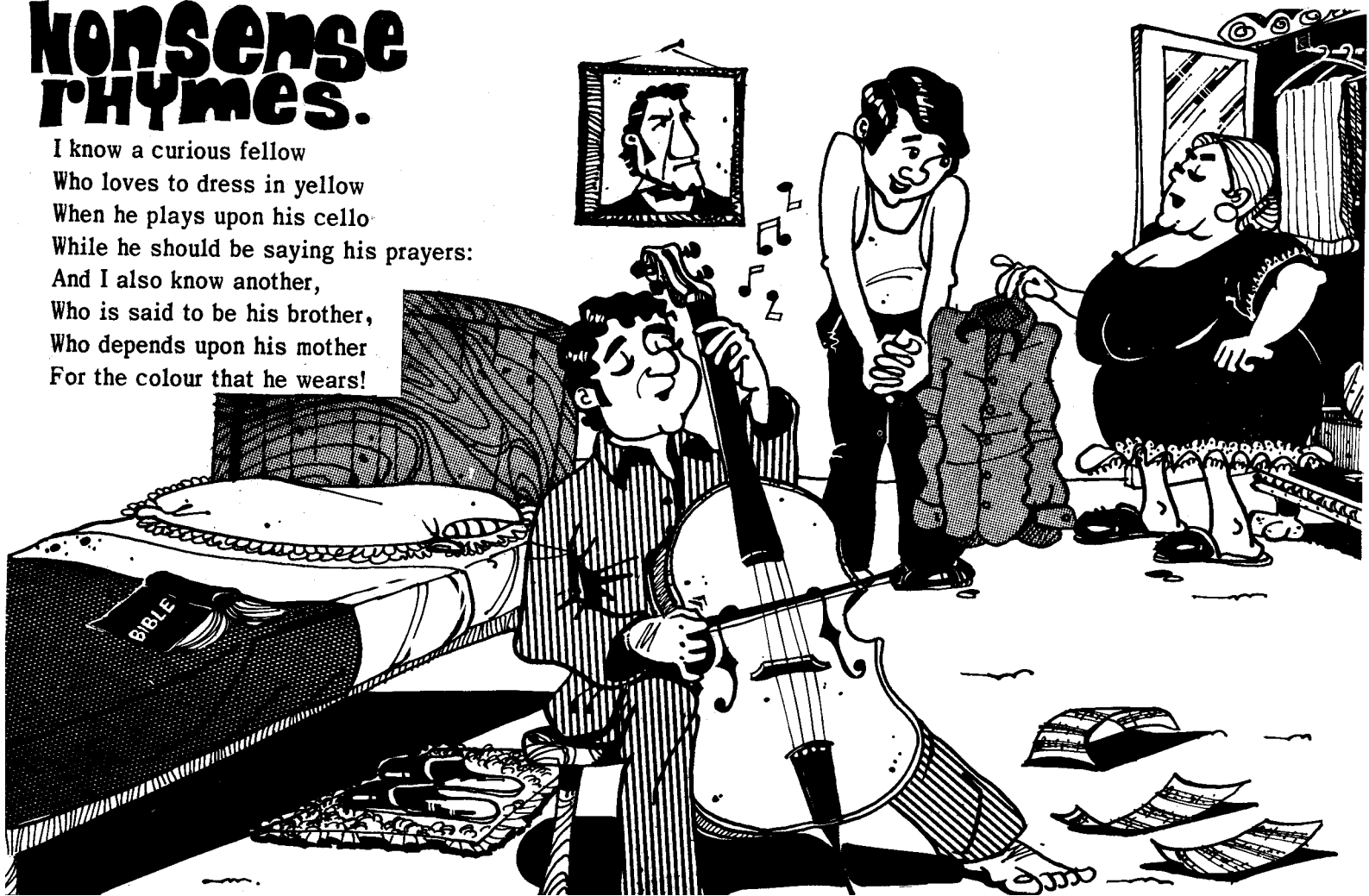
I'll make a ~~simple~~ paper-boat  
And float it on the stream;  
My paper boat will sail away  
As softly as a dream,  
Beyond the seven waterfalls  
To the kingdom of the wise,  
Where dreamy drowsy elephants  
Have emeralds for eyes.

I'll make a lovely paper-boat  
And float it on a lake,  
Until I reach some distant shore  
I will be wide-awake.  
I'll pass beyond the seven worlds  
To there where nothing dies,  
Because its little children  
Have heaven in their eyes.



# Nonsense rhymes.

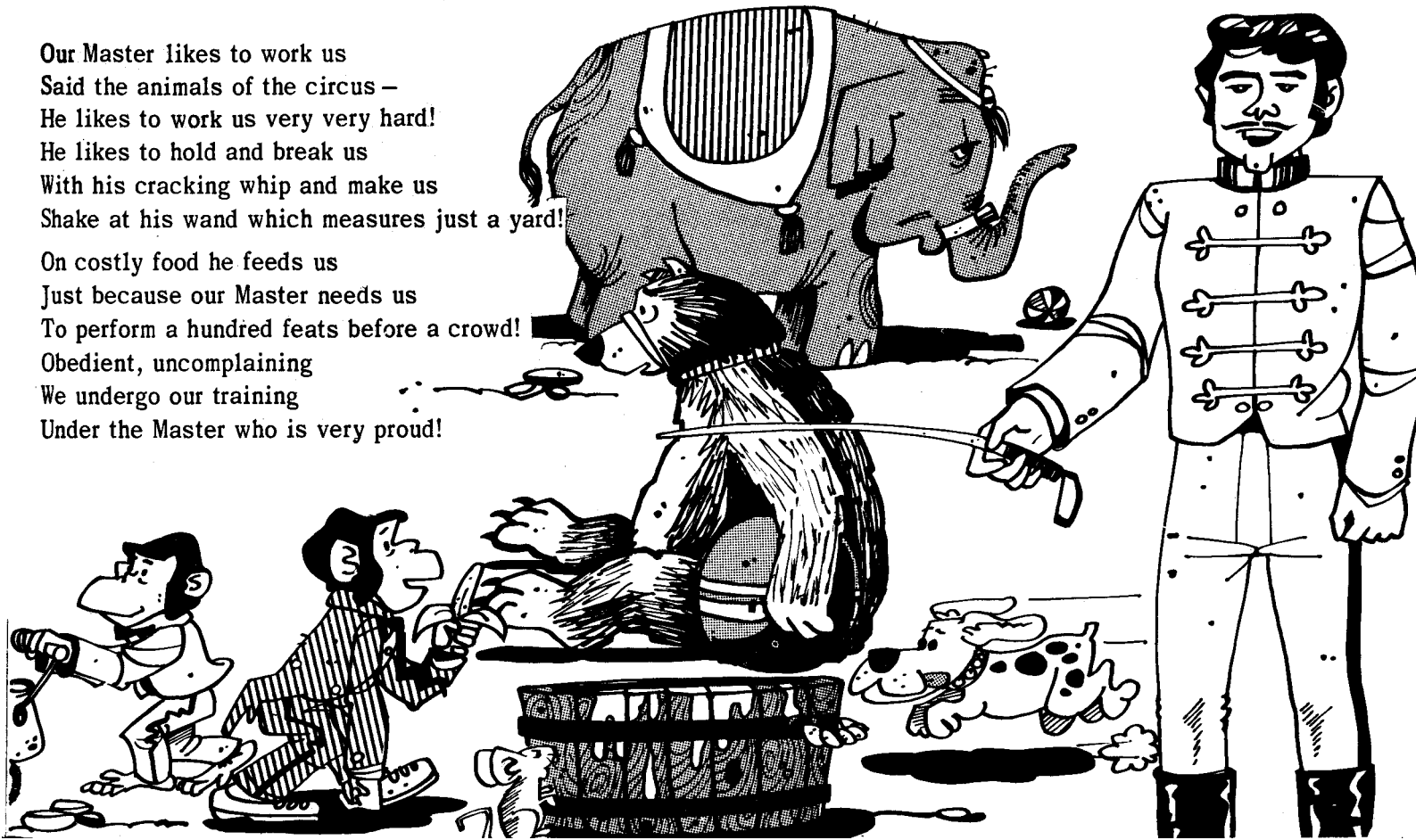
I know a curious fellow  
Who loves to dress in yellow  
When he plays upon his cello  
While he should be saying his prayers:  
And I also know another,  
Who is said to be his brother,  
Who depends upon his mother  
For the colour that he wears!



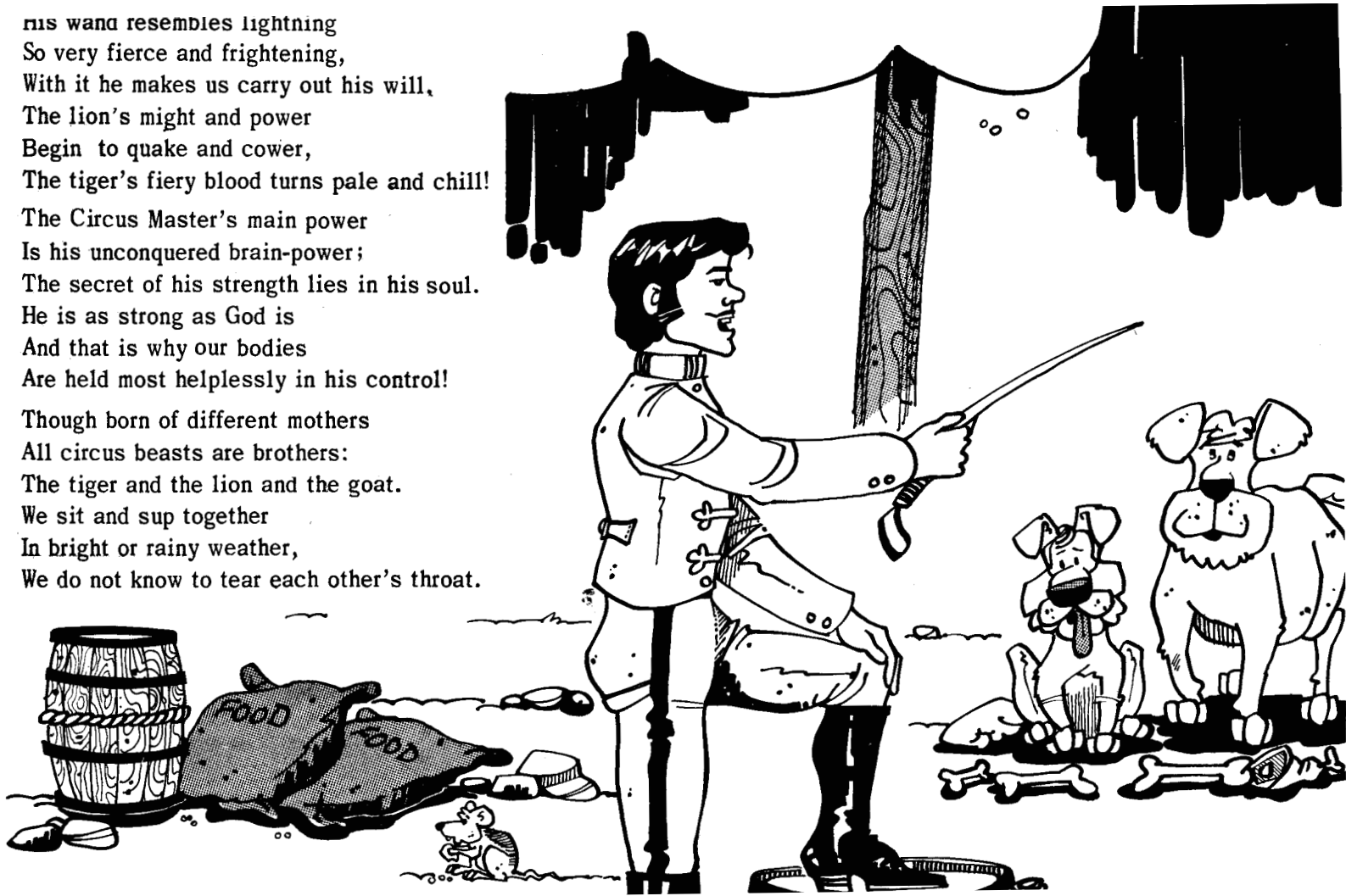
# CIRCUS

Our Master likes to work us  
Said the animals of the circus –  
He likes to work us very very hard!  
He likes to hold and break us  
With his cracking whip and make us  
Shake at his wand which measures just a yard!

On costly food he feeds us  
Just because our Master needs us  
To perform a hundred feats before a crowd!  
Obedient, uncomplaining  
We undergo our training  
Under the Master who is very proud!



his wand resembles lightning  
So very fierce and frightening,  
With it he makes us carry out his will,  
The lion's might and power  
Begin to quake and cower,  
The tiger's fiery blood turns pale and chill!  
The Circus Master's main power  
Is his unconquered brain-power;  
The secret of his strength lies in his soul.  
He is as strong as God is  
And that is why our bodies  
Are held most helplessly in his control!  
Though born of different mothers  
All circus beasts are brothers:  
The tiger and the lion and the goat.  
We sit and sup together  
In bright or rainy weather,  
We do not know to tear each other's throat.



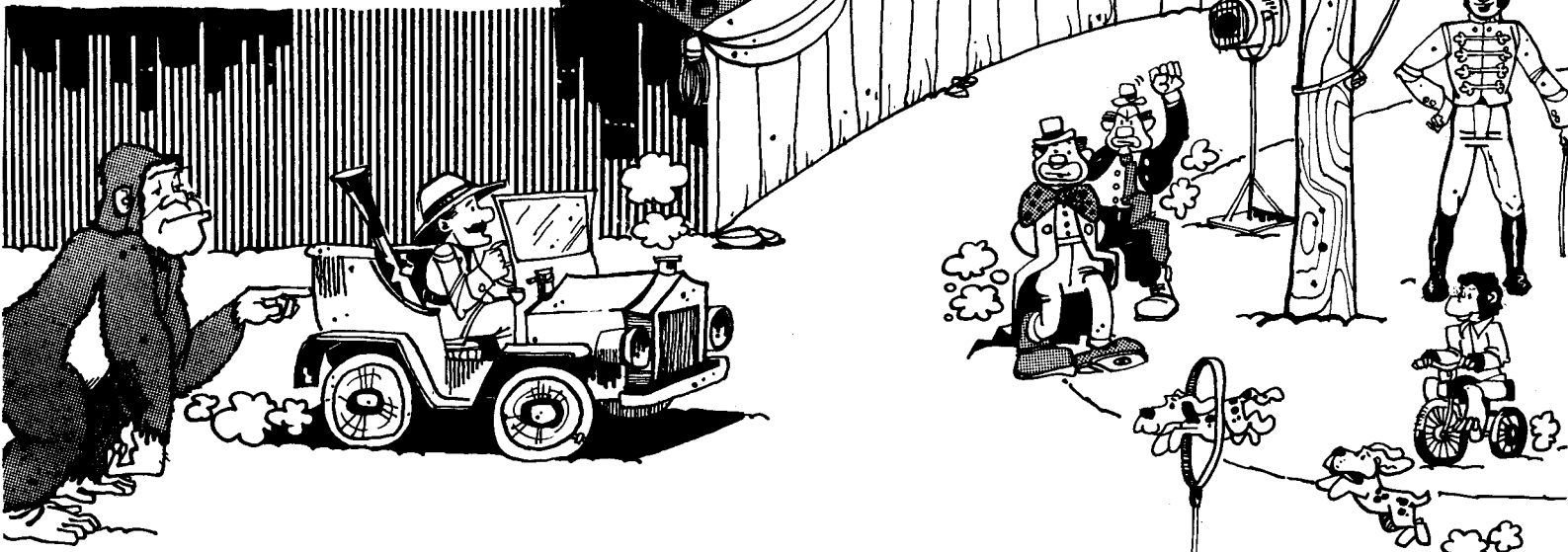


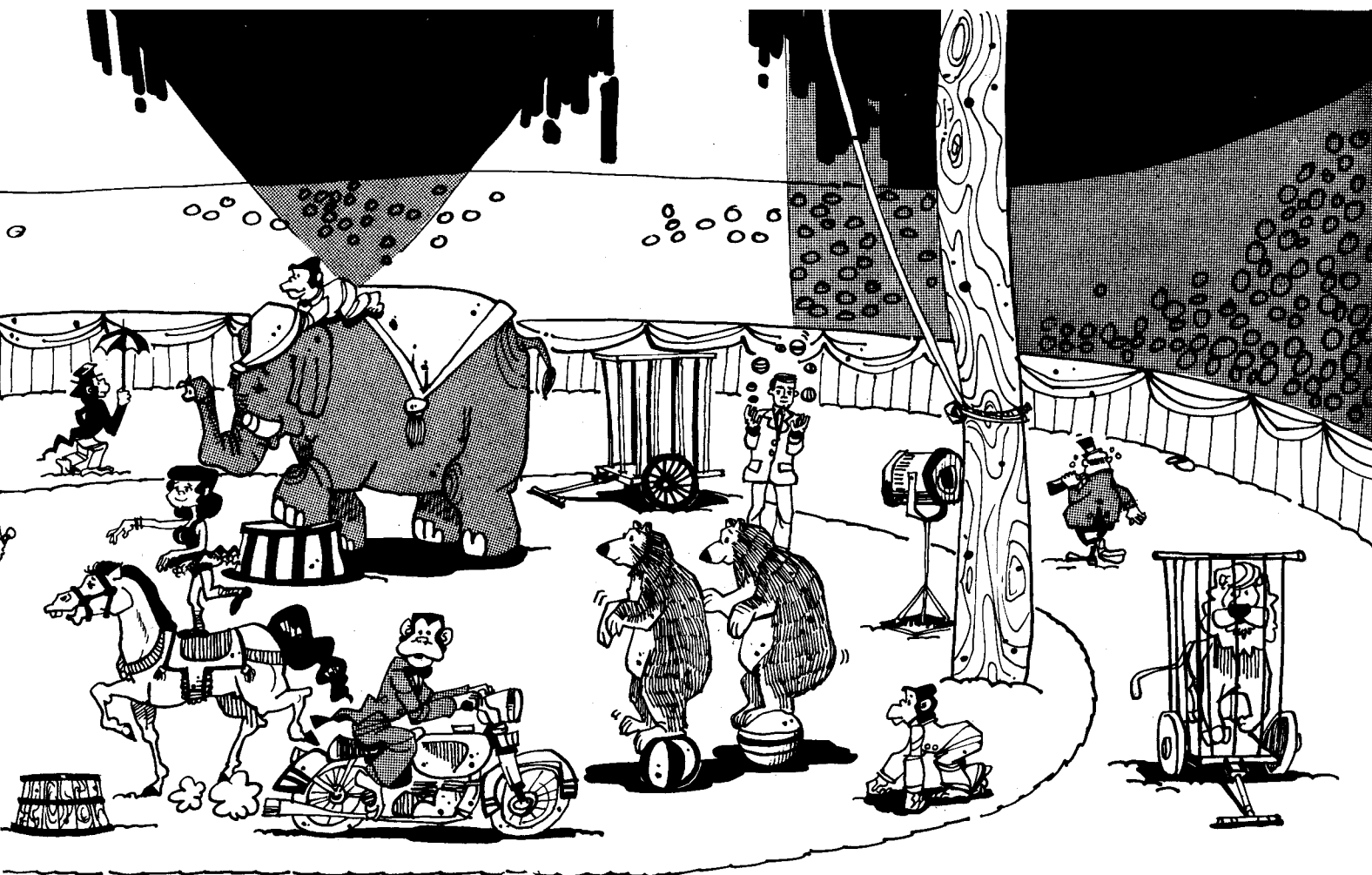
Affection is the one key  
To elephant and monkey,  
The one key to the heart of horse and bear.

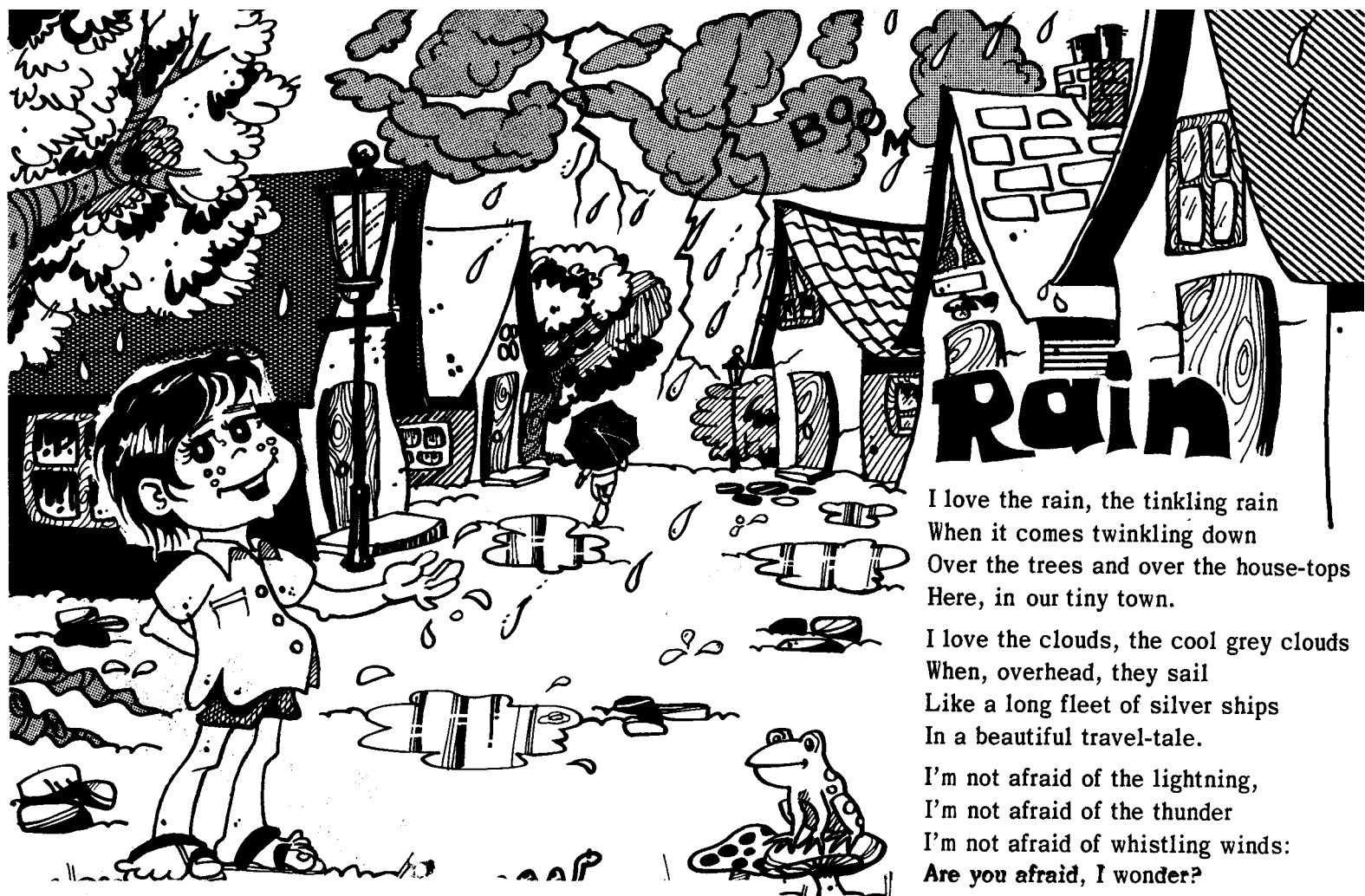
All real masters know it;  
Although they do not show it,  
We feel it hidden in their sternest stare.

So, while with whips they mould us,  
It is with love they hold us  
And everything on earth loves love, you know.

O Master! you may work us  
Since life is but a circus  
And Time, the master of the circus-show!







# Rain

I love the rain, the tinkling rain  
When it comes twinkling down  
Over the trees and over the house-tops  
Here, in our tiny town.

I love the clouds, the cool grey clouds  
When, overhead, they sail  
Like a long fleet of silver ships  
In a beautiful travel-tale.

I'm not afraid of the lightning,  
I'm not afraid of the thunder  
I'm not afraid of whistling winds:  
Are you afraid, I wonder?